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TAGS: KSCA SENV AORC EZ
SUBJECT: CZECH REPUBLIC: REPLY TO DEMARCHE ON CITES COP15
OUTREACH ON U.S. SPECIES PROPOSALS

REF: 6668

¶1. (SBU) We delivered reftel demarche on January 25 to Czech Environment Ministry Head of CITES Management Authority Jan Kucera. Mr. Kucera told us that the EU Council will present joint EU positions for the CITES meeting. Since the Council has yet to present its position, Mr. Kucera offered the Czech Republic's positions for EU negotiations.

¶2. (SBU) Mr. Kucera indicated that the Czech Republic supports U.S. proposals on shark species, red and pink corals, and the snake trade. With respect to the U.S. proposal to transfer polar bear from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I, the Czech Republic remains undecided. Kucera said that the Czechs will propose to keep an open position on this item and await comments from the World Conservation Union, the World Wildlife Foundation, and other "qualified bodies." Kucera also commented that Canada or Greenland's management plans could serve as models.

¶3. (SBU) The Czech Republic will not support the U.S. proposal to remove the bobcat from Appendix II. Kucera explained that the bobcat skin is similar to that of the European lynx, which has been rescued from near local extinction in recent years but is still endangered. Hunting for trophies is widespread, and the similarity between the lynx and the bobcat (should the bobcat lose its status as a protected species) could lead to enforcement problems for authorities protecting the lynx population.

¶4. (SBU) Mr. Kucera also included a list of his delegation members:

- Head of Delegation: Mrs. Dagmar Zikova; dagmar.zikova@mzp.cz
- Alternate Head of Delegation: Mr. Jan Kucera; jan.kucera@mzp.cz
- Mr. Adam Kurz; adam.kurz@nature.cz
- Mr. Ondrej Kloucek; ondrej.kloucek@mzp.cz
- Ms. Helena Kostinkova; helena.kostinkova@mzp.cz
- Mrs. Pavla Rihova; rihova@cizp.cz

Thompson-Jones